



LOIS LANE
& LANA LANG™

75¢
597
FEB 88

ACTION

COMICS®



BY JOHN BYRNE &
LEONARD STARR
WITH KEITH WILLIAMS



*I guarantee that this scene does
not appear in this issue!*
Boh

LOIS LANE and LANA LANG in

VISITOR

THE MOMENT OF THE
MILLENNIUM IS
SAFELY PASSED.

BUT FOR
SUPERMAN THE
CONSEQUENCES
MAY BE ONLY
BEGINNINGS...

SO THIS
IS KENT'S
HOME
TOWN...

Welcome to
Smallville

THE TOWN WHERE
MIRACLES HAPPEN...

MAYOR
RUTHERFORD
B. SMALL

JOHN BYRNE: writer/penciller
LEONARD STARR
AND KEITH WILLIAMS: inkers
TOM ZIUKO: colorist
JOHN COSTANZA: letterer
MIKE CARLIN: editor
featuring characters created by
JERRY SIEGEL and JOE SHUSTER

"THE TOWN
WHERE
MIRACLES
HAPPEN,"
HM?

WELL, I'VE SEEN
MORE *MADEST*
TOWN SLOGANS.

FUNNY, KENT NEVER
MENTIONED THERE WAS
ANYTHING *MIRACULOUS*
HAPPENING OUT HERE
IN THE MIDDLE OF
KANSAS.

COME TO THAT,
THOUGH, KENT'S NEVER
MENTIONED MUCH
ABOUT HIS OLD
PRAIRIE HOME AT
ALL.

I KNOW HIS
PARENTS
STILL LIVE
HERE...

OR, RATHER,
JUST OUTSIDE
TOWN ON THE
FAMILY FARM.

AND I KNOW
KENT'S AN *ONLY*
CHILD, NO BROTHERS
OR SISTERS.

BUT THAT'S
ALL I KNOW.
ODD THAT I
NEVER NOTICED
BEFORE WHAT
A *MYSTERY*
MAN CLARK
KENT REALLY
IS.

I SUPPOSE THAT'S
GOT A LOT TO DO
WITH THE FACT THAT
I NEVER *THOUGHT*
ABOUT IT MUCH.

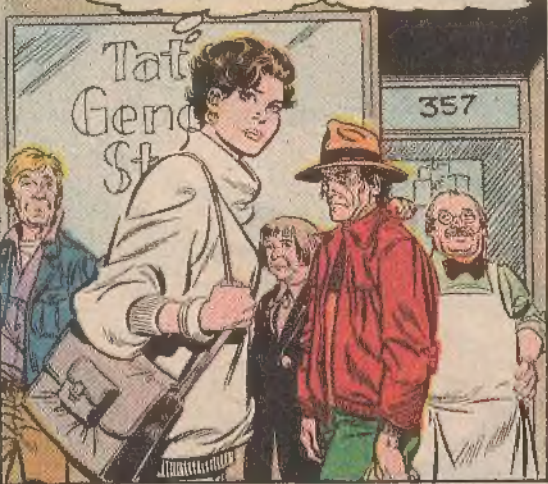
I SPENT QUITE A FEW
YEARS *DESPIISING* CLARK
FOR BEATING ME OUT
ON THE FIRST *SUPERMAN*
EXCLUSIVE.

LATELY, THOUGH, I
CAN'T SEEM TO WORK
UP THE NECESSARY
BILE ANYMORE.

HE'S JUST SO
RELENTLESSLY *SWEET*
AND *STRONG* AND...

AND I'D BETTER
WAKE UP AND
FIND A PLACE TO
PARK THIS
RENTED JALOPY.

NOW, THEN... I'M GOING TO NEED SOME KIND OF BASE OF OPERATIONS. AND SOMEWHERE I CAN ASK A FEW QUESTIONS.



"THAT HOTEL LOOKS RIGHT..."

SAY... YOU WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO KNOW A WOMAN NAMED LANA, WOULD YOU?

LANA LANG?



SURE DO.

WHY DO YOU ASK?



IF I HAD AN ANSWER FOR THAT ONE I MIGHT NOT EVEN BE HERE. THIS LANA WOMAN ATTACKED CLARK KENT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAILY PLANET NEWSROOM...

THEN SHE JUMPED OUT A WINDOW...

...AND FLEW AWAY!



CLARK RAN OUT AFTER HER, AND HASN'T BEEN SEEN OR HEARD FROM SINCE!



LET'S JUST SAY I'M A FRIEND OF A FRIEND.

OUT T'HER PLACE, I RECKON. I WOULDN'T GO OUT THERE, THOUGH.

D'YOU KNOW WHERE SHE IS, RIGHT NOW?

LANA PROB'LY WANTS SOME PEACE AN' QUIET AFTER ALL THAT'S HAPPENED.



OH?

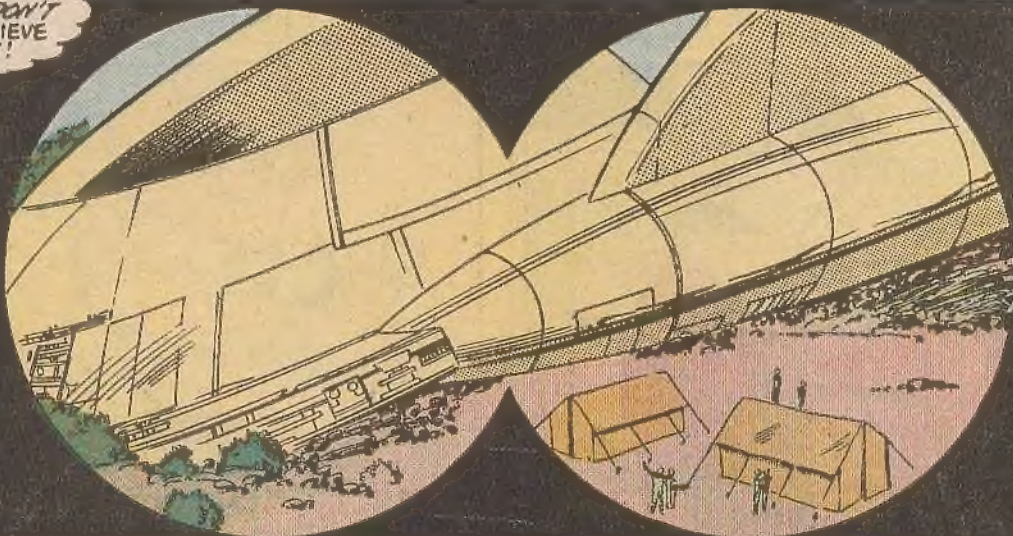
WHAT'S THAT?

WELL, THE FLYING SAUCER LANDIN' ON HER PROPERTY...

AN' HER AN' ALL THE OTHERS COMIN' BACK FROM THE DEAD AN' ALL...



I DON'T BELIEVE IT!



A FLYING SAUCER! AN HONEST-TO-GOSH FLYING SAUCER!

CRASHED IN THE MIDDLE OF A FARM IN THE MIDDLE OF KANSAS!



AND NOBODY HEARD ABOUT IT...?!

OKAY, GRANTED A SPACESHIP LANDING ON EARTH ISN'T EXACTLY FRONT PAGE NEWS THESE DAYS.

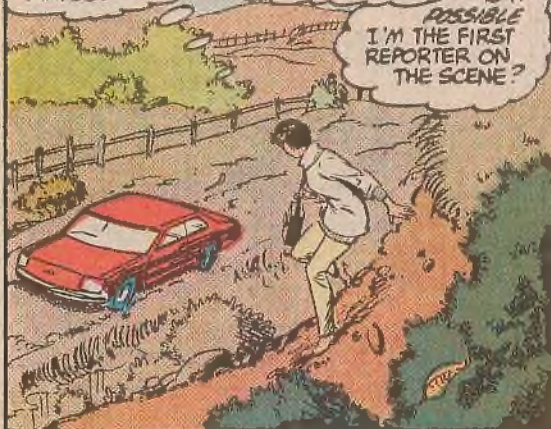
SUPERMAN IS FROM KRYPTON, AND THERE'VE BEEN ENOUGH ALIENS IN THE JUSTICE LEAGUE ALONE TO OPEN THEIR OWN DELEGATION TO THE U.N....



BUT ~~SOMEBODY~~ SHOULD HAVE HEARD ABOUT IT. THE PRESS IN KANSAS CITY, MAYBE.

AND SURELY EVEN A PLACE AS TINY AS SMALLVILLE MUST HAVE ONE NEWSPAPER, EVEN A RADIO STATION.

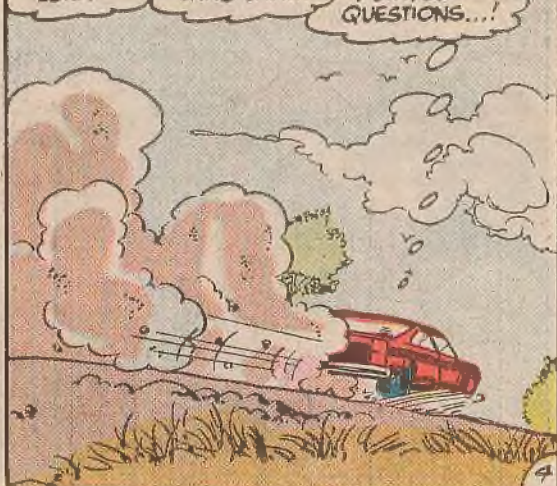
IS IT POSSIBLE I'M THE FIRST REPORTER ON THE SCENE?



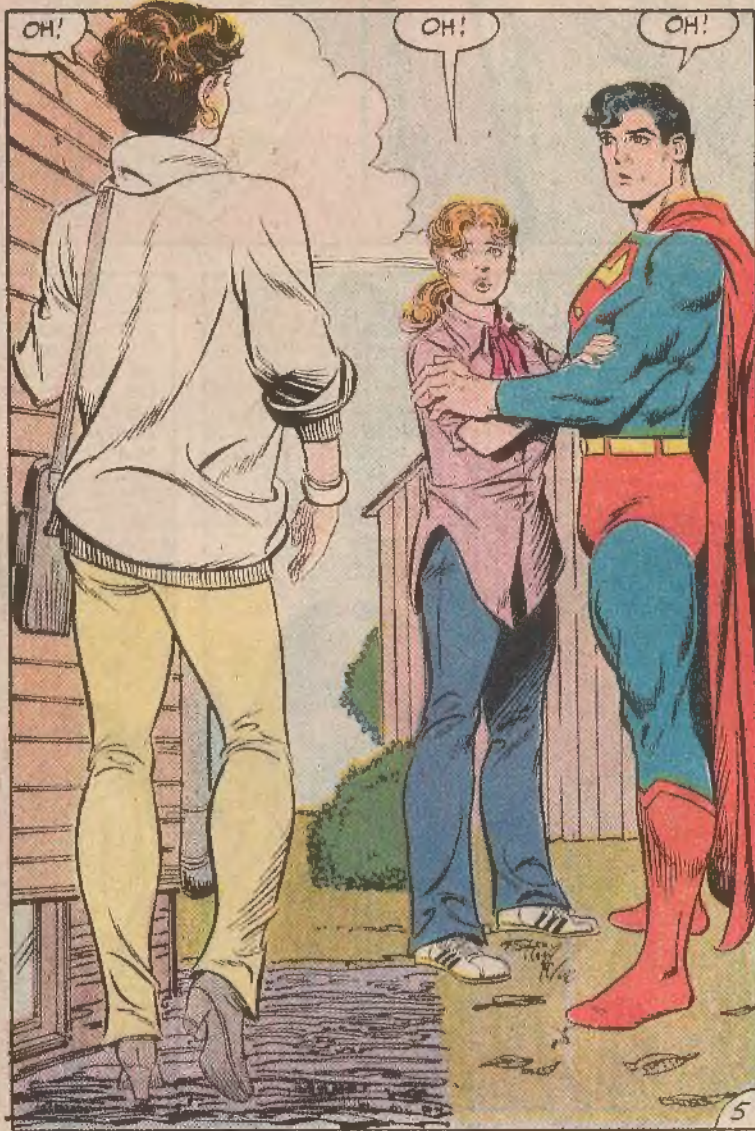
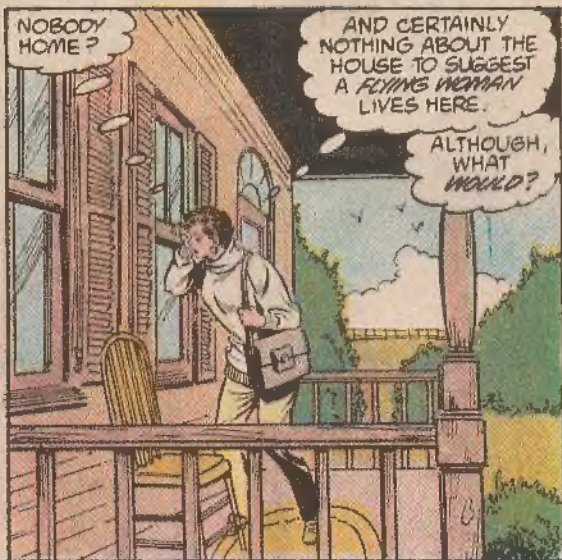
GUESSING IN THE DARK, LOIS!

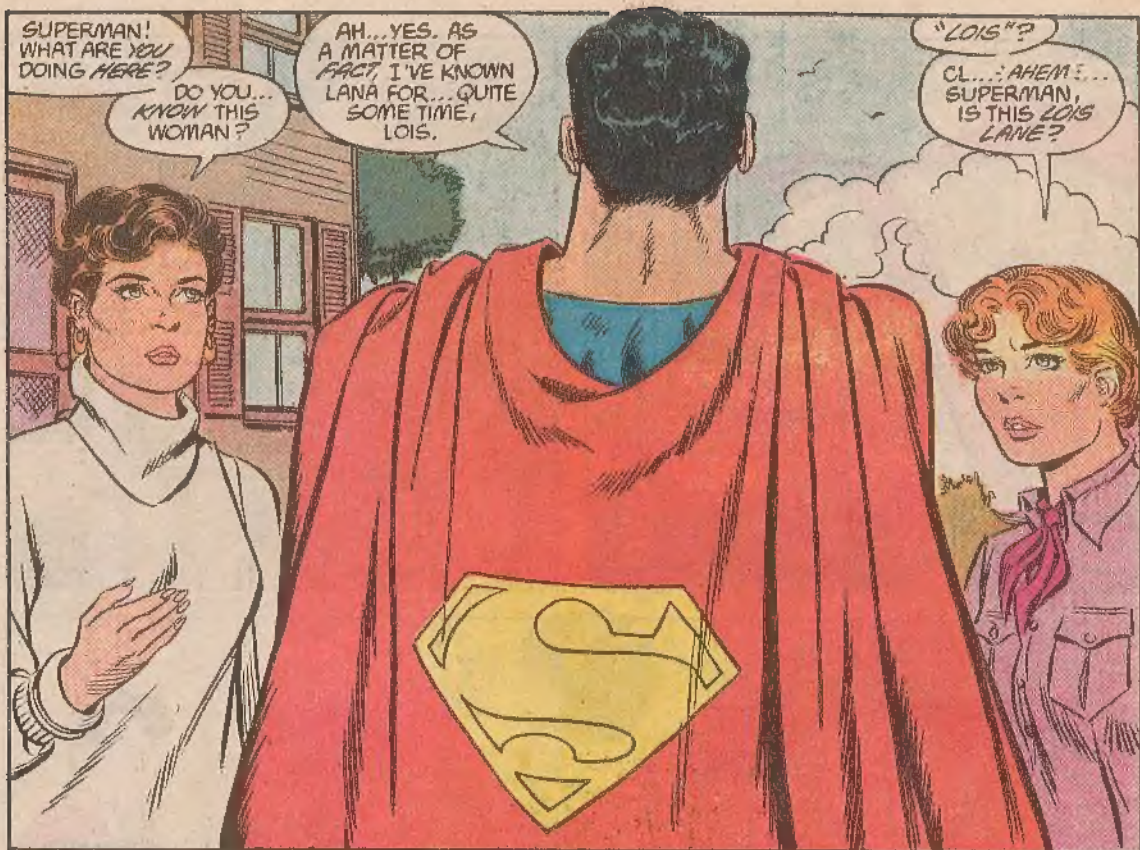
TIME TO FIND THIS LANG LADY...

...AND POSE HER A FEW POINTED QUESTIONS...



CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING





SUPERMAN!
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE?

DO YOU...
KNOW THIS
WOMAN?

AH...YES. AS
A MATTER OF
FACT, I'VE KNOWN
LANA FOR... QUITE
SOME TIME,
LOIS.

"LOIS"?

CL... AHEM...
SUPERMAN,
IS THIS LOIS
LANE?



THAT'S ME. AND I'M
BETTING YOU'RE LANA
LANG, THE WOMAN WHO
RIPS OPEN SHIRTS AND
JUMPS OUT WINDOWS...

SHE'S VERY PRETTY...
IS SUPERMAN... IN
LOVE WITH HER?

ER...YES, I GUESS
I AM. OR, I ~~WAS~~.
I DON'T DO THAT
ANYMORE, THANKS
TO SUPERMAN.

SHE'S
BEAUTIFUL...
NO WONDER
SUPERMAN'S
IN LOVE
WITH HER.

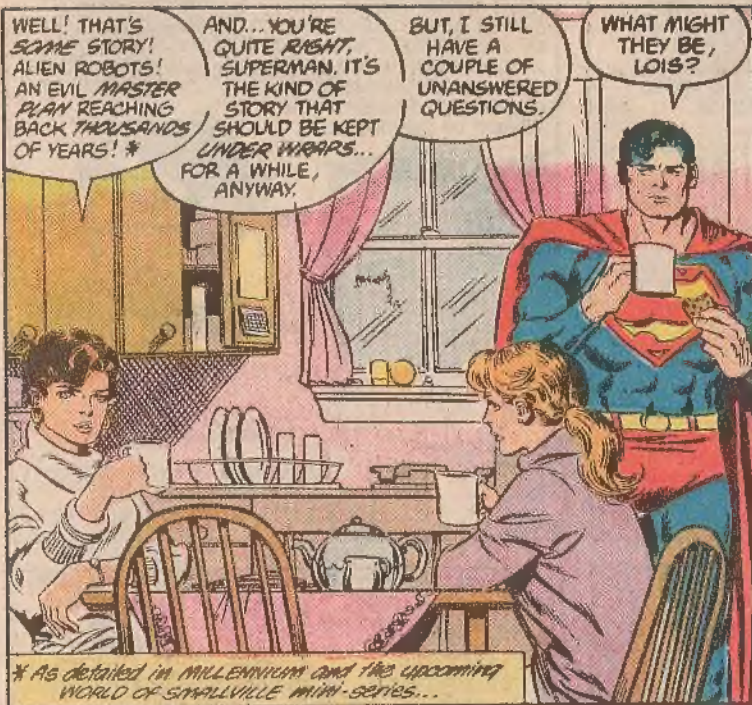


YOU DON'T, HM?

I DON'T SUPPOSE
YOU'D CARE TO TELL
ME ALL ABOUT THAT?
OR IS THIS ANOTHER
STORY I LOSE TO
CLARK KENT,
SUPERMAN?

WELL...IT ~~WAS~~ WITH
KENT THAT THIS ALL
STARTED, LOIS...

BUT, AS YOU CAN
PLAINLY SEE,
KENT ISN'T HERE
JUST NOW...



WELL! THAT'S SOME STORY! ALIEN ROBOTS! AN EVIL MASTER PLAN REACHING BACK THOUSANDS OF YEARS! *

AND... YOU'RE QUITE RIGHT, SUPERMAN. IT'S THE KIND OF STORY THAT SHOULD BE KEPT UNDER WRAPS... FOR A WHILE, ANYWAY.

BUT, I STILL HAVE A COUPLE OF UNANSWERED QUESTIONS.

WHAT MIGHT THEY BE, LOIS?



WELL, WHY SMALLVILLE, FOR ONE? WHAT'S YOUR CONNECTION TO THIS LITTLE TOWN THAT THE MANHUNTERS WOULD HAVE COME HERE?

PRESUMABLY IT'S GOT SOMETHING TO DO WITH YOUR FRIENDSHIP WITH CLARK KENT?

* As detailed in *MILLENNIUM* and the upcoming *WORLD OF SMALLVILLE* mini-series...



"FRIENDSHIP" IS PERHAPS TOO STRONG A WORD, LOIS.

KENT AND I HAVE A... WORKING RELATIONSHIP, WHICH THE MANHUNTERS ATTEMPTED TO EXPLOIT.

HM...



YOU KNOW... IT'S ODD, BUT SEEING YOU HERE, IN KENT'S OLD HOME TOWN, WITH KENT'S OLDEST FRIEND, ALL MIXED UP WITH THESE COSMIC SHENANIGANS...

IT'S GOT ME THINKING ABOUT YOU IN A WAY I NEVER REALLY HAVE BEFORE, SUPERMAN.

IT'S GOT ME... WONDERING...



WHAT... ABOUT, LOIS?

ABOUT WHO YOU ARE, AND WHERE YOU CAME FROM.

ABOUT "SUPERMAN." THAT'S THE NAME I GAVE YOU, AFTER YOU FIRST SHOWED UP IN METROPOLIS.

YOU'VE NEVER EVEN PRETENDED IT WAS YOUR REAL NAME.



NO... NO.

IT'S... FUNNY. WHEN YOU CAME ALONG IT HAD BEEN QUITE A FEW YEARS-- ALMOST SINCE THE SECOND WORLD WAR, REALLY-- SINCE WE'D SEEN ANY **REAL** SUPERHEROES.



YOUR DEBUT SEEMED TO CAUSE A WHOLE **EXPLOSION** OF COSTUMED CRIMEFIGHTERS. **THE BATMAN** IN GOTHAM. THE NEW **GREEN LANTERN** IN COAST CITY. THE SECOND **FLASH** IN CENTRAL CITY.

PRETTY SOON IT SEEMED LIKE EVERY MAJOR CITY IN AMERICA HAD ITS OWN CHAMPION.

AND MORE THAN NOT A FEW OF THEM WERE EVEN **EXTRATERRESTRIALS**, LIKE YOU.



WHAT'S YOUR POINT, LOIS?

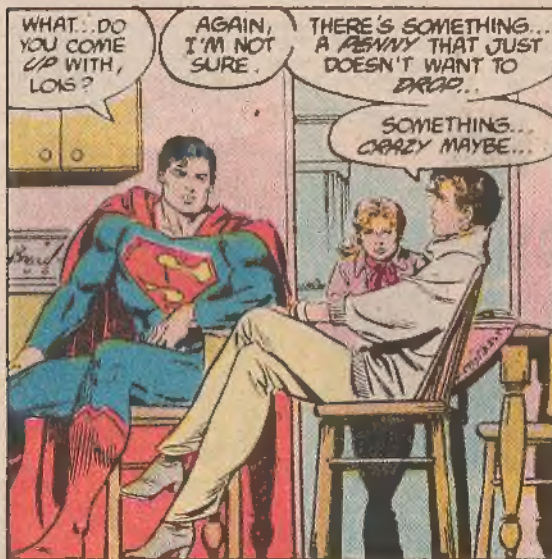
MY POINT? I'M NOT SURE YET... EXCEPT THAT THE WORLD HAD SORT OF **FORGOTTEN** HOW GREAT IT WAS TO BE **PROTECTED**. AND THEN WHEN YOU CAME ALONG...



...WE WERE ALL SO **THRILLED** TO HAVE A SUPERHERO AROUND AGAIN-- ESPECIALLY THE GREATEST SUPERHERO EVER--

THAT WE SORT OF **OVER-LOOKED** SOME OF THE DETAILS. BUT NOW, WHEN I THINK ABOUT THOSE OTHER HEROES, THEIR **SECRET IDENTITIES** AND ALL...

AND WHEN I PUT THAT **TOGETHER** WITH YOU, SMALLVILLE, CLARK KENT...



WHAT... DO YOU COME UP WITH, LOIS?

AGAIN, I'M NOT SURE.

THERE'S SOMETHING... A **FEELING** THAT JUST DOESN'T WANT TO **DROP**...

SOMETHING... **CRAZY** MAYBE...



SOMETHING LIKE...

WELL... I'LL ASK YOU, POINT BLANK...

SUPERMAN... ARE YOU CLARK KENT?

LAND SAKES!
WHAT A
QUESTION!

I RECKON CLARK
WOULD BE
FLATTERED, AT
LEAST!

WHO...? OH...
YOU'RE
CLARK'S PARENTS,
AREN'T YOU?

I SAW A
PHOTOGRAPH
OF YOU ONCE,
AT HIS
APARTMENT.

THAT'S RIGHT.
I'M MARTHA.
AND THIS HERE'S
JONATHAN.

AND WE DON'T
NEED TO ASK
WHO YOU ARE.
IT'S A PLEASURE
TO FINALLY GET
TO MEET YOU,
MISS LANE.

LOIS.

IT'S
GOOD TO
MEET YOU,
TOO.

I TAKE IT YOU
KNOW SUPERMAN...?

SURE DO. WHY...
IT WAS ME THAT
FOUND THE ROCKET
THAT BROUGHT
HIM TO EARTH!

IT WAS...??

PA...!!!

DIDN'T CLARK
EVER TELL YOU
ABOUT IT, LOIS?
THERE'S NO REASON
TO KEEP IT ALL
SECRET ANYMORE.

CLARK WAS... OH,
ABOUT TWO, THREE
MONTHS OLD WHEN
IT HAPPENED.

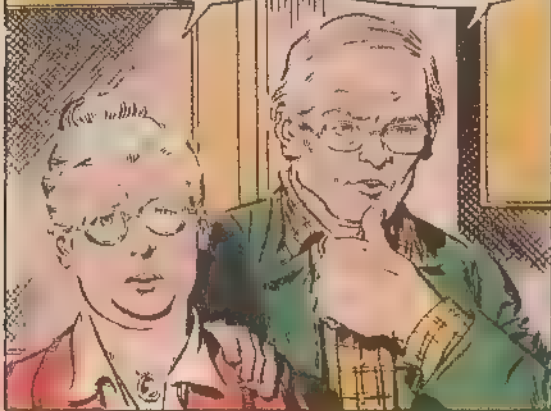
YEP, WE WERE
SHOWED IN. WORST
BLIZZARD EVER
IN THESE PARTS.

THE BLIZZARD
THE MANHUNTERS
CAUSED?

OH... YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT PART, DO YOU?

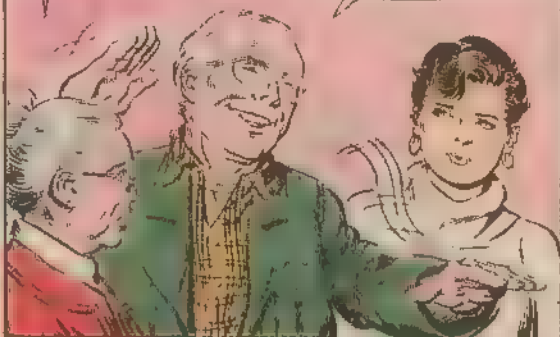
TERRIBLE BUSINESS. POOR LANA AND THE REST... BEING USED LIKE THAT

GUESS NONE OF IT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF I HADN'T GOT TO THE ROCKET BEFORE THEM.



JONATHAN BROUGHT THE BABY HOME AND... WELL, IT WASN'T FIVE MINUTES BEFORE WE KNEW HE WAS SOMETHING SPECIAL.

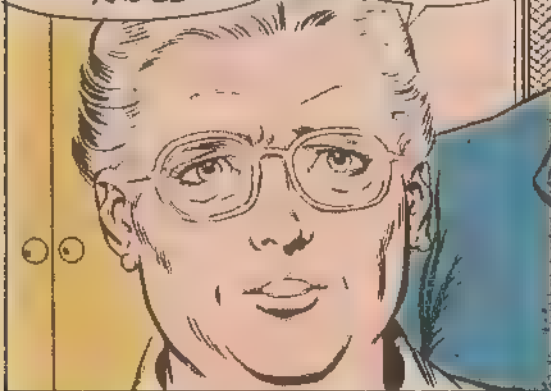
YEP AS SOON AS HE GOT A LOOK AT CLARK ASLEEP IN HIS CRIB HE FLW OUT OF MA'S ARMS AND JUMPED RIGHT IN WITH HIM! SCARED LITTLE CLARK OUT OF A YEAR'S GROWTH!



OF COURSE, WE REALIZED IF THE GOVERNMENT OR ANYBODY LIKE THAT FOUND OUT ABOUT LITTLE KAL-- THAT'S HIS KRYPTONIAN NAME, DID YOU KNOW?

KAL-EL--

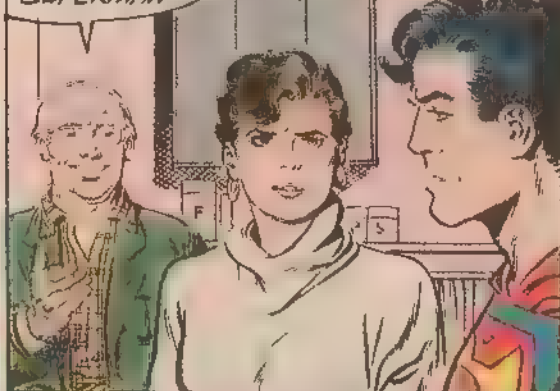
WELL, WE FIGURED THEY'D COME AND WHIP HIM OFF TO SOME AWFUL LABORATORY OR SOMETHING.



SO WE KEPT HIS WHOLE EXISTENCE A SECRET, UNTIL HE WAS READY TO GO OUT INTO THE WORLD AS SUPERMAN!

AND, THIS IS ALL TRUE, SUPERMAN!

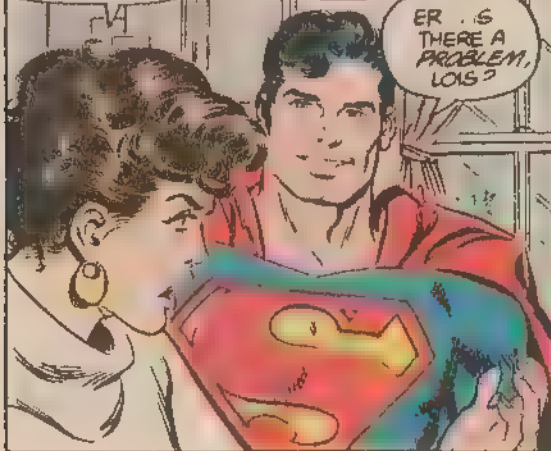
ER YES, LOIS. MRS. AND MRS. KENT RAISED ME.



SO YOU AND CLARK ARE.. ALMOST LIKE STEPBROTHERS??

WELL, YES I GUESS THAT IS A PRETTY GOOD DESCRIPTION OF THE RELATIONSHIP

ER... IS THERE A PROBLEM, LOIS?



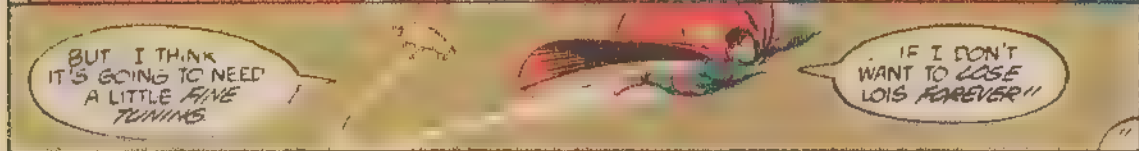
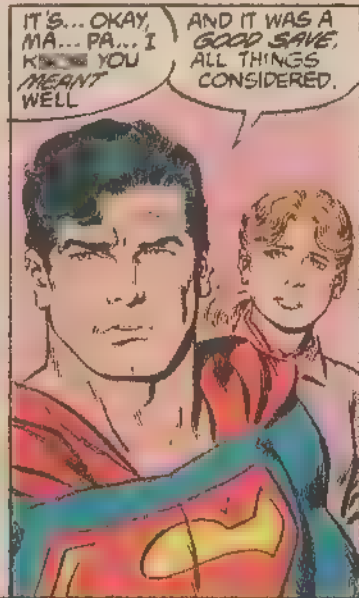
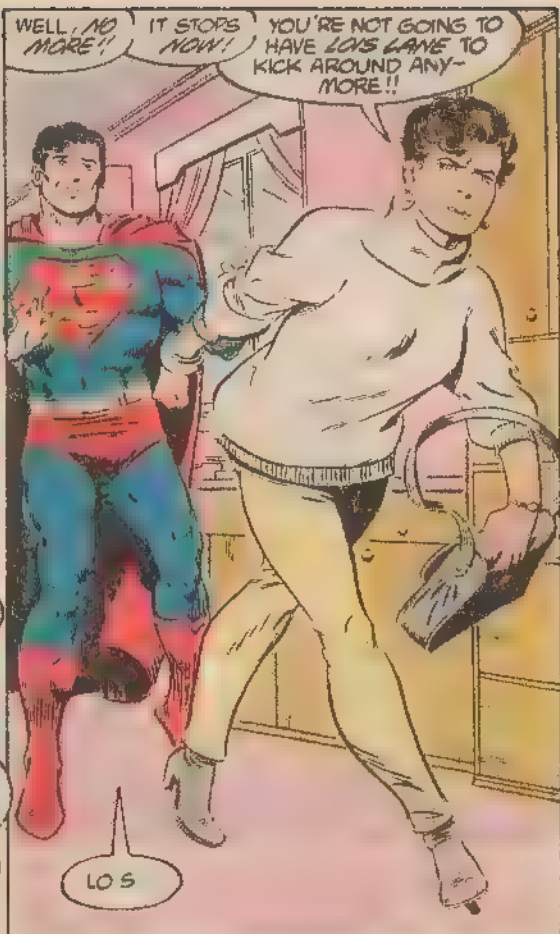
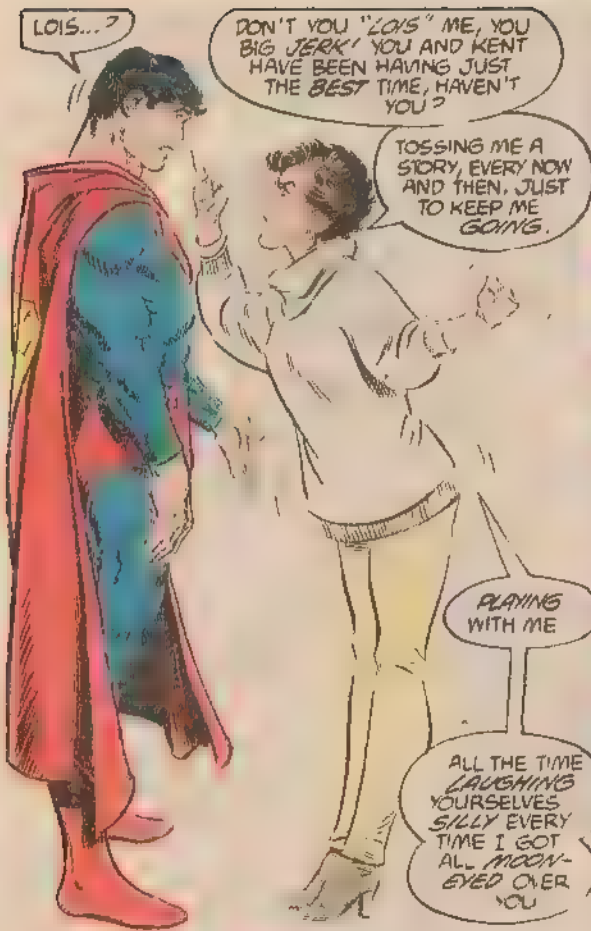
PROBLEM!?

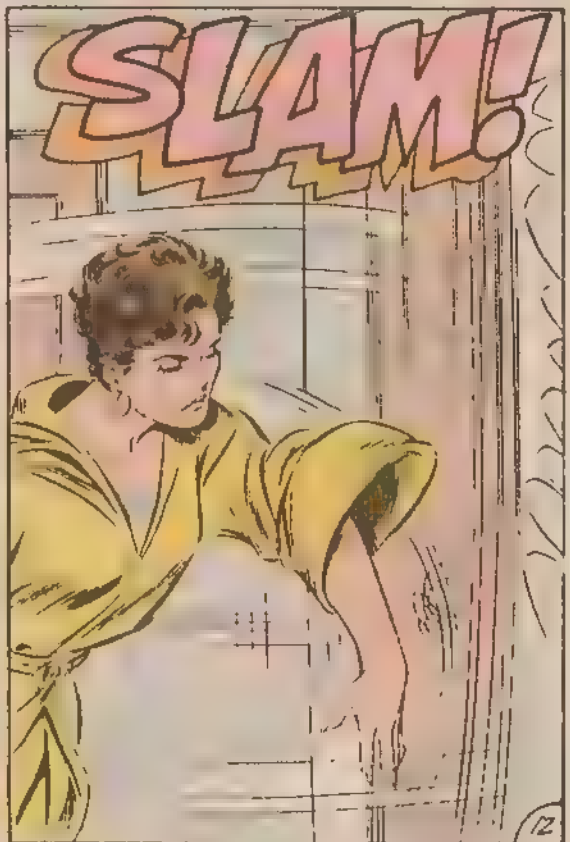
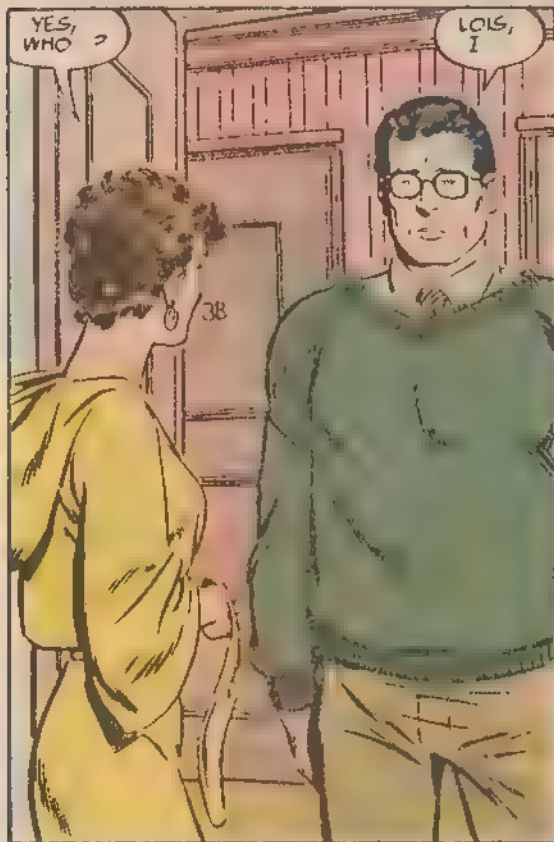
PROBLEM?!?

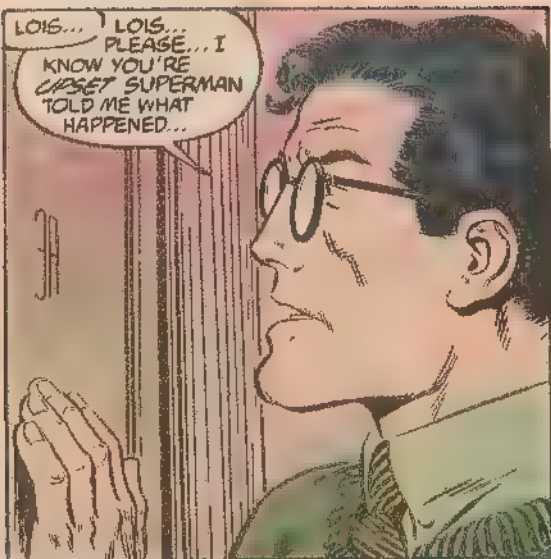
WHY OF ALL THE MISERABLE, NO GOOD UNDERHANDED...!!!

OOH-H-H-H!!!

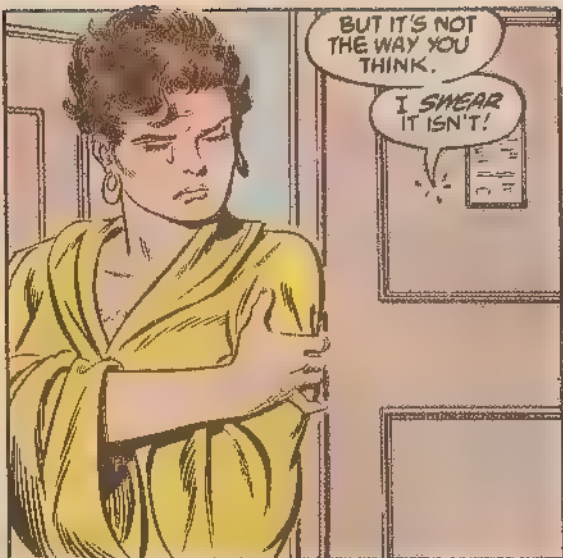








LOIS... PLEASE... I KNOW YOU'RE CASSET SUPERMAN TOLD ME WHAT HAPPENED...



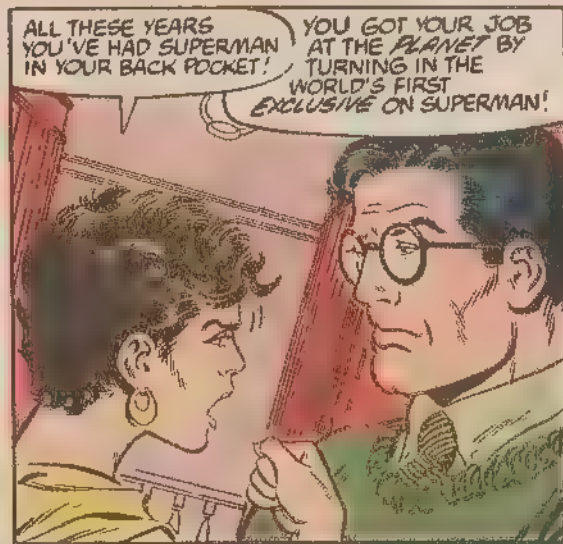
BUT IT'S NOT THE WAY YOU THINK.

I SWEAR IT ISN'T!



NOT THE WAY I THINK?

NOT THE WAY I THINK??



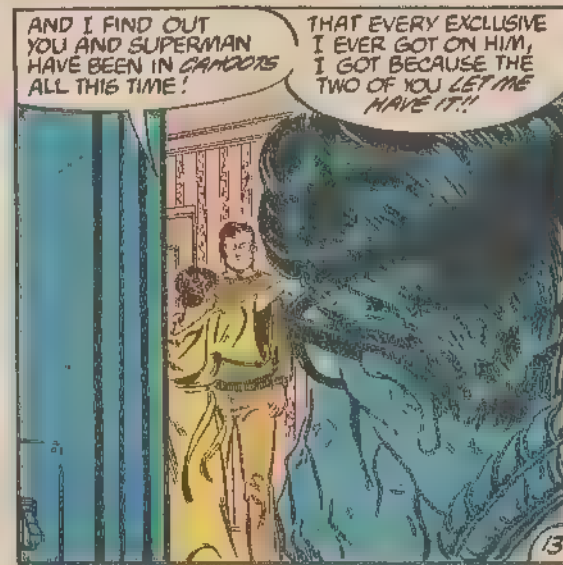
ALL THESE YEARS YOU'VE HAD SUPERMAN IN YOUR BACK POCKET!

YOU GOT YOUR JOB AT THE PLANET BY TURNING IN THE WORLD'S FIRST EXCLUSIVE ON SUPERMAN!



AND NOW, JUST WHEN I GET TO THE POINT THAT I THINK *MAYBE* YOU'RE NOT SUCH A SLIME-BALL...

MAYBE I CAN STOP HATING YOU FOR BEATING ME OUT ON THE *STORY* OF THE CENTURY. !!



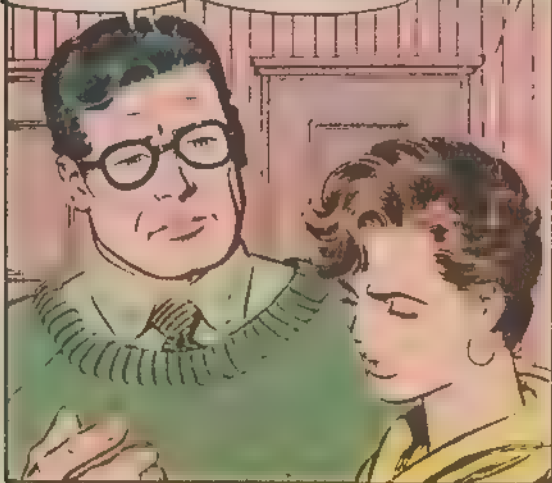
AND I FIND OUT YOU AND SUPERMAN HAVE BEEN IN *CANDORS* ALL THIS TIME!

THAT EVERY EXCLUSIVE I EVER GOT ON HIM, I GOT BECAUSE THE TWO OF YOU LET ME HAVE IT!!

LOIS...IT ISN'T LIKE THAT. I PROMISE YOU IT ISN'T.

LOOK... I KNOW HOW YOU MUST FEEL RIGHT NOW.

DO YOU, KENT?

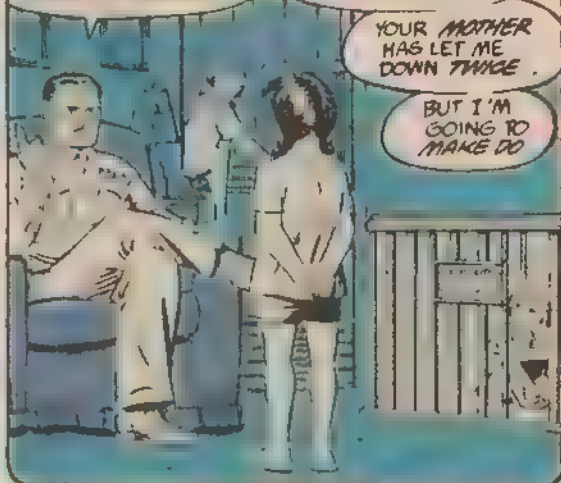


ALL RIGHT, YOUNG LAD. LET'S GET SOMETHING CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD.

ALL MY LIFE I'VE WANTED A BOY A SON TO CARRY ON MY NAME.

YOUR MOTHER HAS LET ME DOWN TWICE.

BUT I'M GOING TO MAKE DO.



SURE I DO, LOIS. YOU'RE CONFUSED AND YOU'RE HURT. BUT THERE'S NO REASON TO BE.

EVEN IF SUPERMAN AND I DID GIVE YOU THOSE STORIES -- WHICH WE DIDN'T -- IT WOULDN'T MATTER.

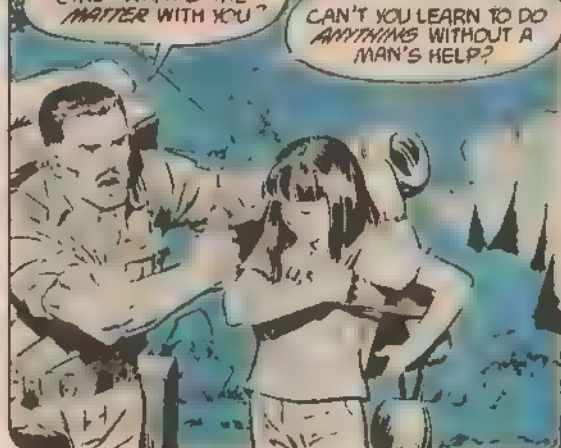


NO! NO! NO!

FOR GOD'S SAKE, GIRL. WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?

ARE YOU GOING TO BE A HELPLESS FEMALE ALL YOUR LIFE?

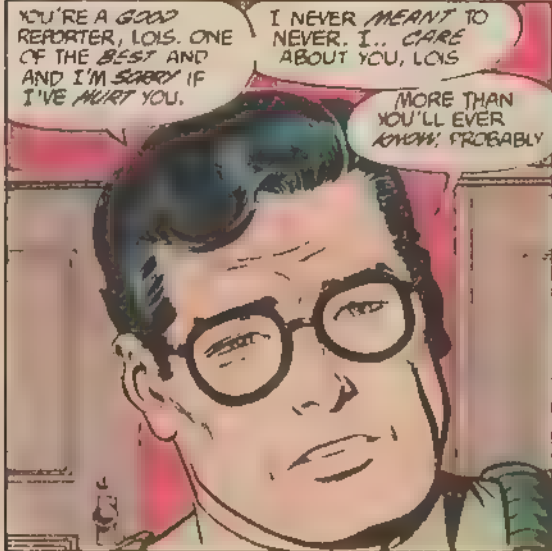
CAN'T YOU LEARN TO DO ANYTHING WITHOUT A MAN'S HELP?



YOU'RE A GOOD REPORTER, LOIS. ONE OF THE BEST AND AND I'M SORRY IF I'VE HURT YOU.

I NEVER MEANT TO NEVER. I... CARE ABOUT YOU, LOIS.

MORE THAN YOU'LL EVER KNOW, PROBABLY.



DO YOU KENT?

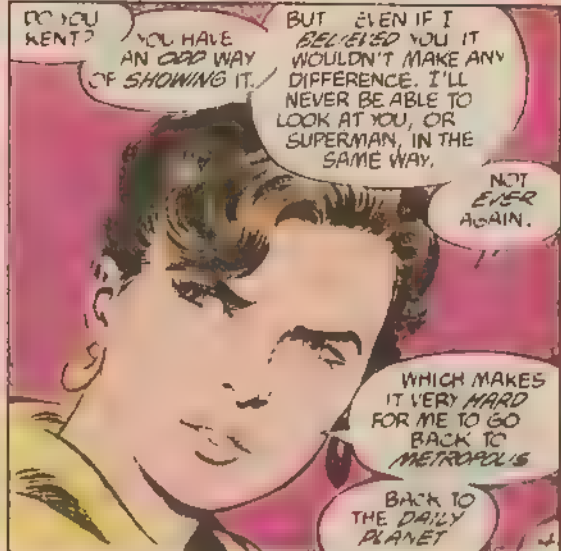
YOU HAVE AN ODD WAY OF SHOWING IT.

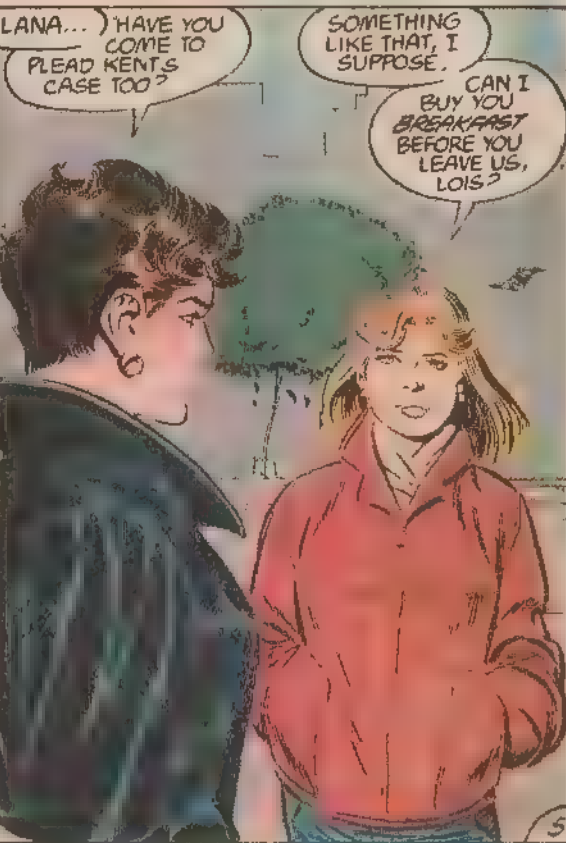
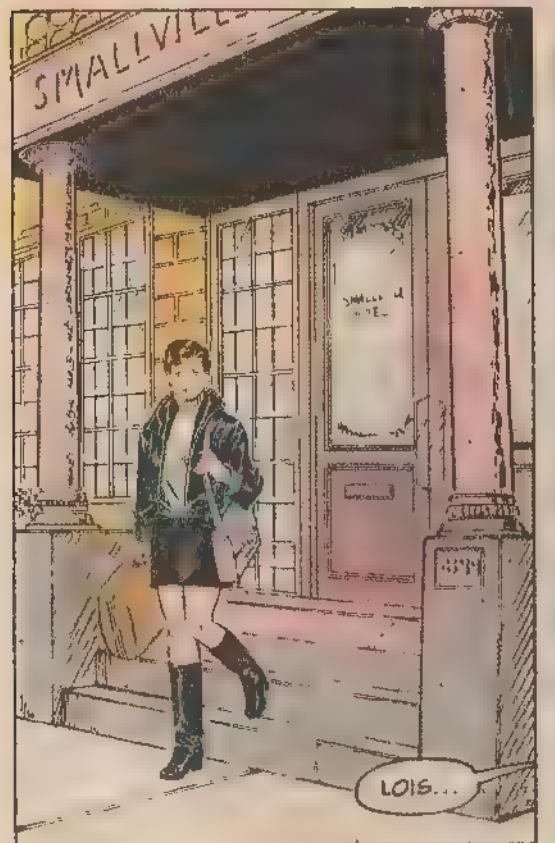
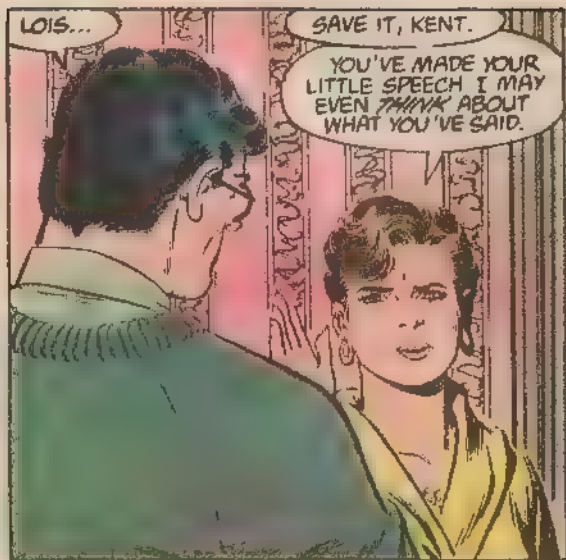
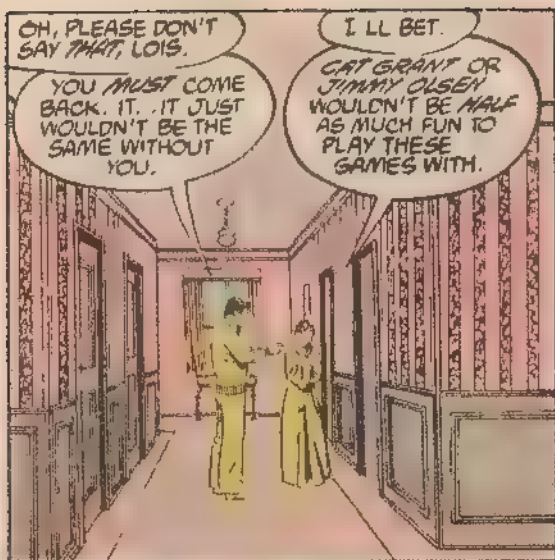
BUT EVEN IF I BELIEVED YOU IT WOULDN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE. I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO LOOK AT YOU, OR SUPERMAN, IN THE SAME WAY.

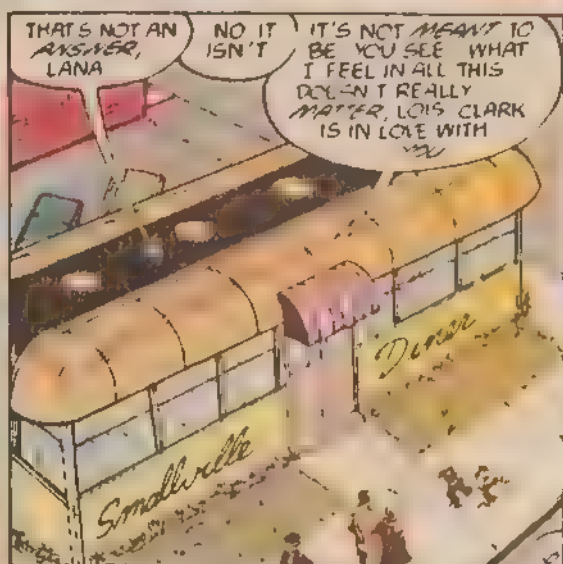
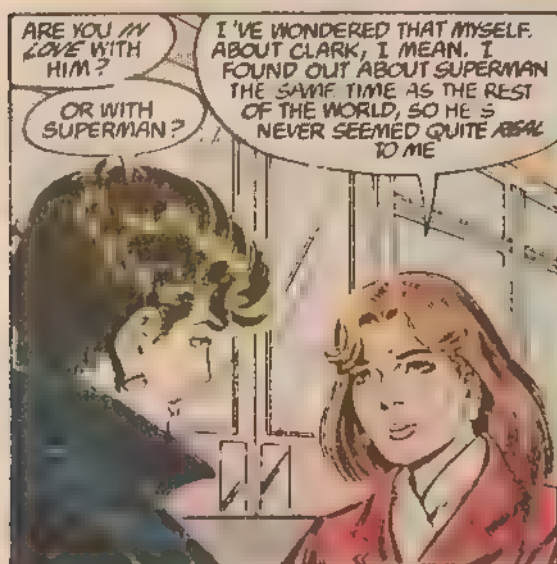
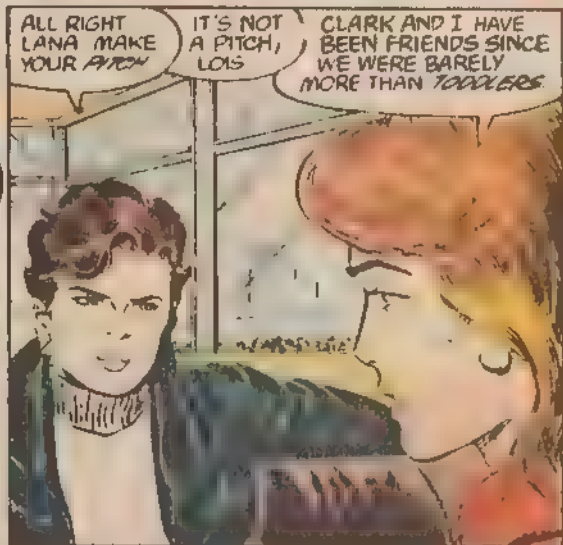
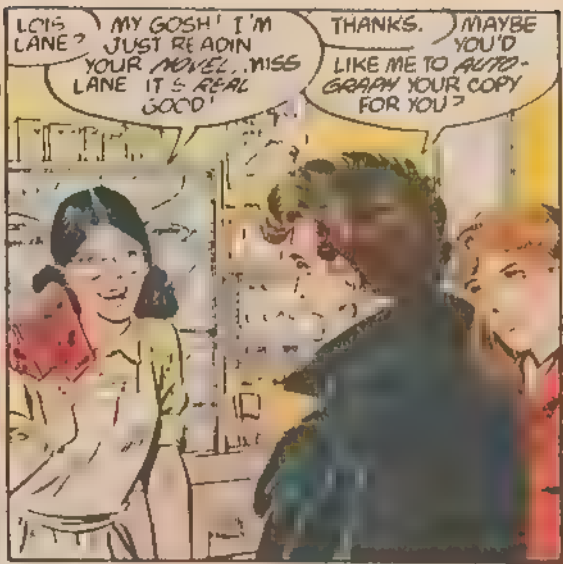
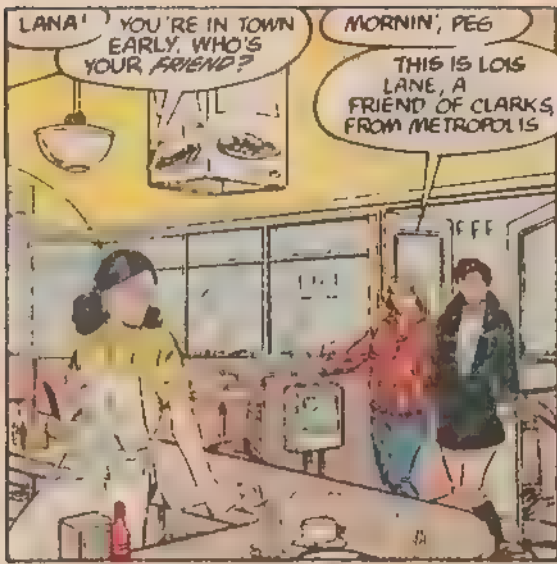
NOT EVER AGAIN.

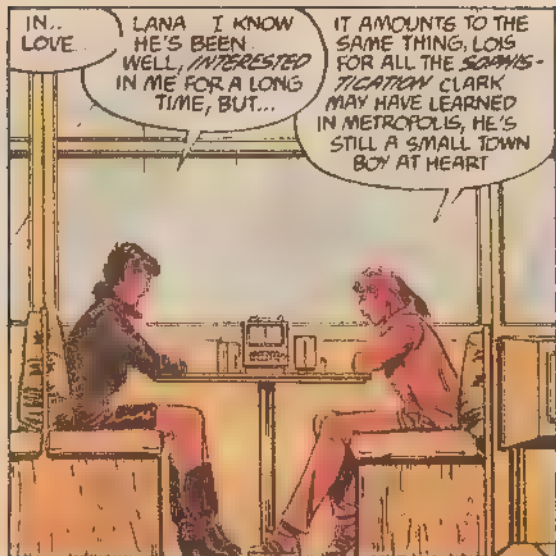
WHICH MAKES IT VERY HARD FOR ME TO GO BACK TO METROPOLIS.

BACK TO THE DAILY PLANET.





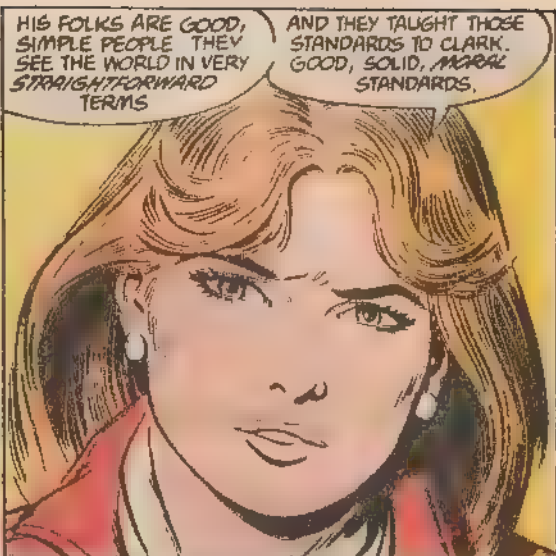




IN... LOVE

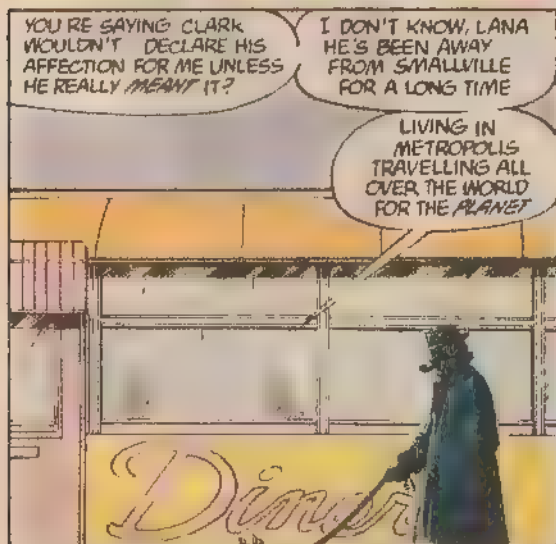
LANA I KNOW HE'S BEEN WELL INTERESTED IN ME FOR A LONG TIME, BUT...

IT AMOUNTS TO THE SAME THING, LOIS FOR ALL THE ROMANTICIZATION CLARK MAY HAVE LEARNED IN METROPOLIS, HE'S STILL A SMALL TOWN BOY AT HEART



HIS FOLKS ARE GOOD, SIMPLE PEOPLE. THEY SEE THE WORLD IN VERY STRAIGHTFORWARD TERMS

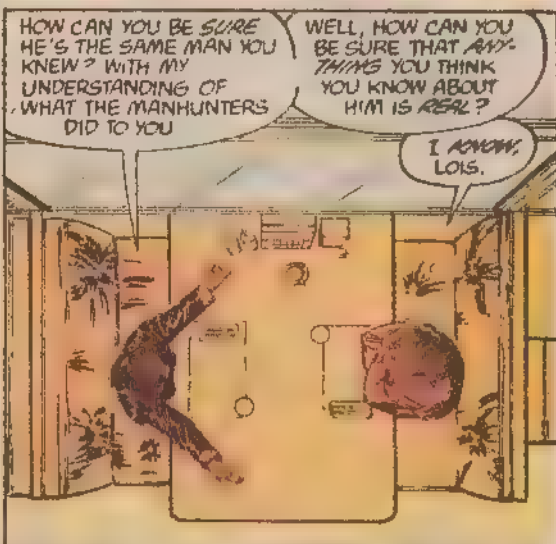
AND THEY TAUGHT THOSE STANDARDS TO CLARK. GOOD, SOLID, MORAL STANDARDS.



YOU'RE SAYING CLARK WOULDN'T DECLARE HIS AFFECTION FOR ME UNLESS HE REALLY MEANT IT?

I DON'T KNOW, LANA HE'S BEEN AWAY FROM SMALLVILLE FOR A LONG TIME

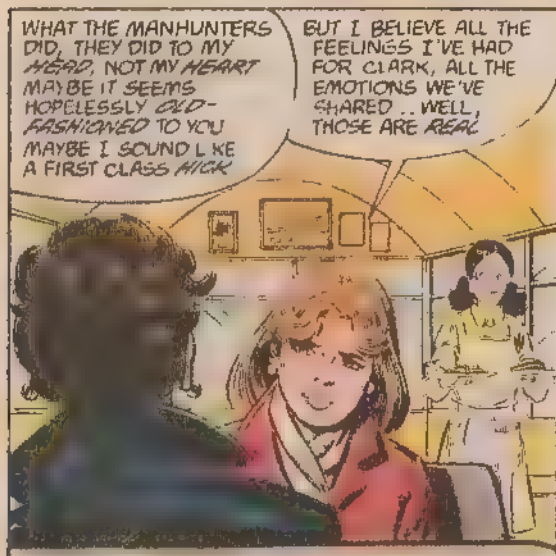
LIVING IN METROPOLIS TRAVELLING ALL OVER THE WORLD FOR THE PLANET



HOW CAN YOU BE SURE HE'S THE SAME MAN YOU KNEW? WITH MY UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE MANHUNTERS DID TO YOU

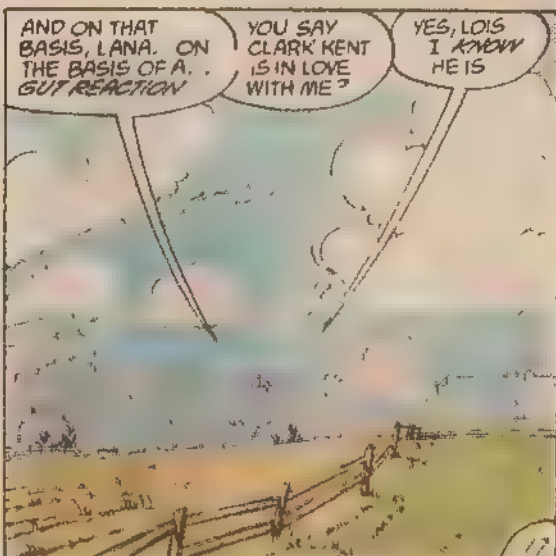
WELL, HOW CAN YOU BE SURE THAT ANYTHING YOU THINK YOU KNOW ABOUT HIM IS REAL?

I KNOW, LOIS.



WHAT THE MANHUNTERS DID, THEY DID TO MY HEAD, NOT MY HEART. MAYBE IT SEEMS HOPELESSLY OLD-FASHIONED TO YOU, MAYBE I SOUND LIKE A FIRST CLASS HICK

BUT I BELIEVE ALL THE FEELINGS I'VE HAD FOR CLARK, ALL THE EMOTIONS WE'VE SHARED... WELL, THOSE ARE REAL

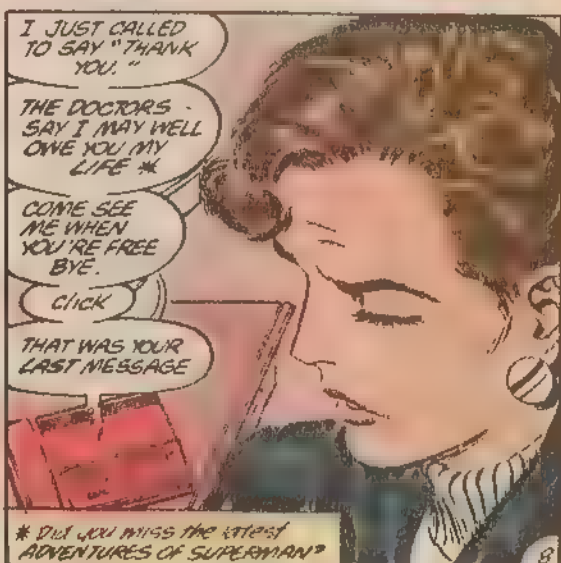
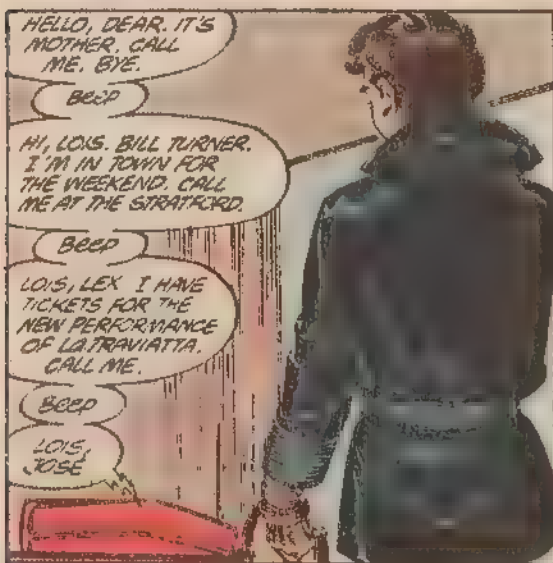
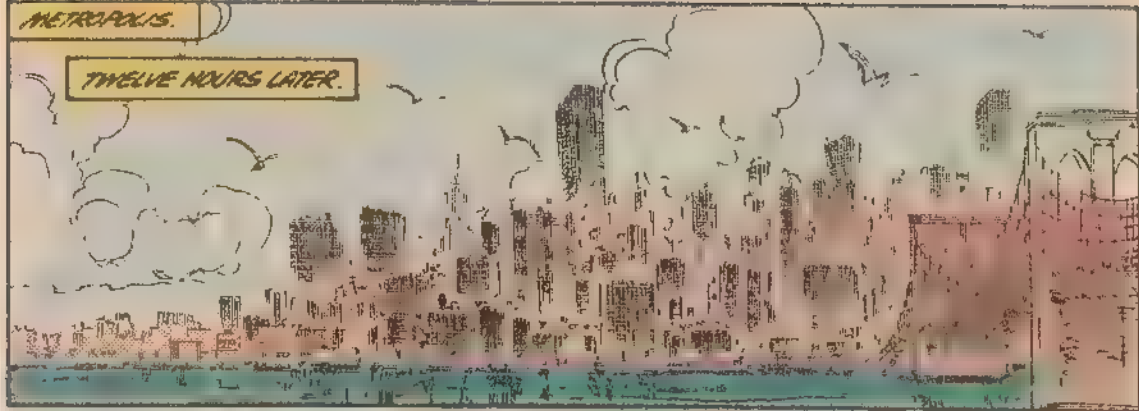


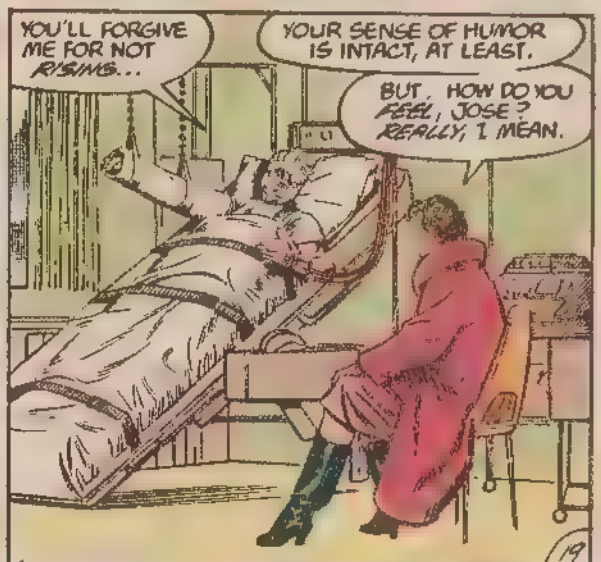
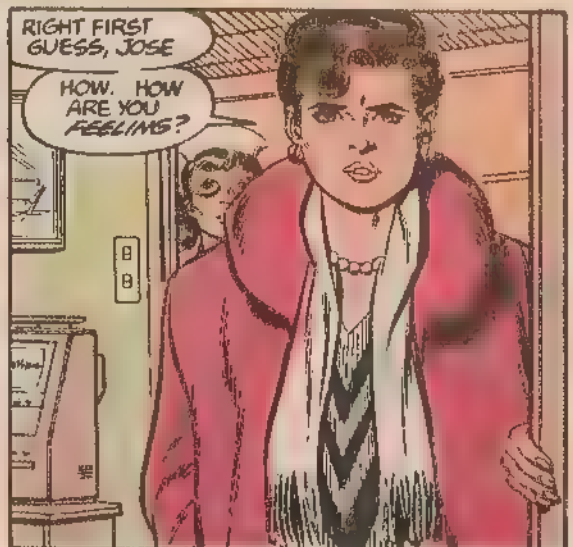
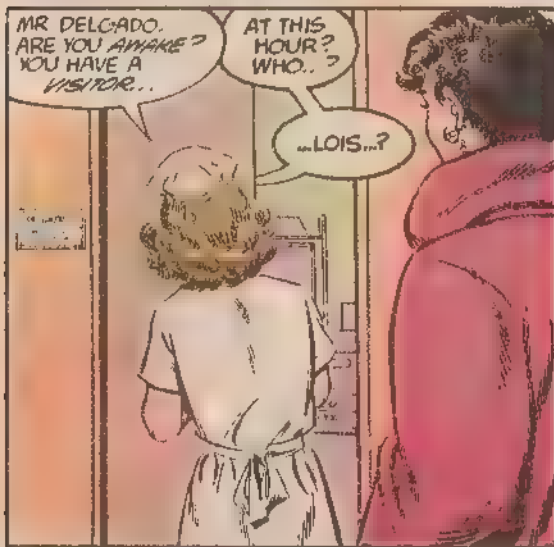
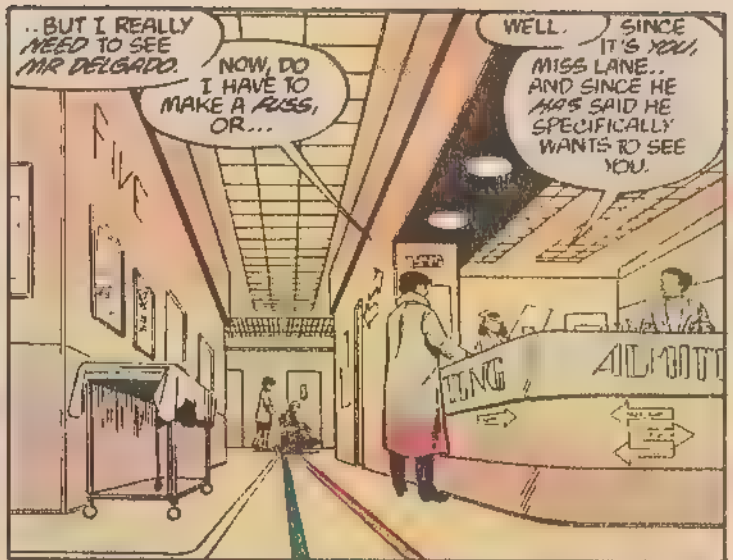
AND ON THAT BASIS, LANA. ON THE BASIS OF A GUT REACTION

YOU SAY CLARK KENT IS IN LOVE WITH ME?

YES, LOIS I KNOW HE IS

TWELVE HOURS LATER.







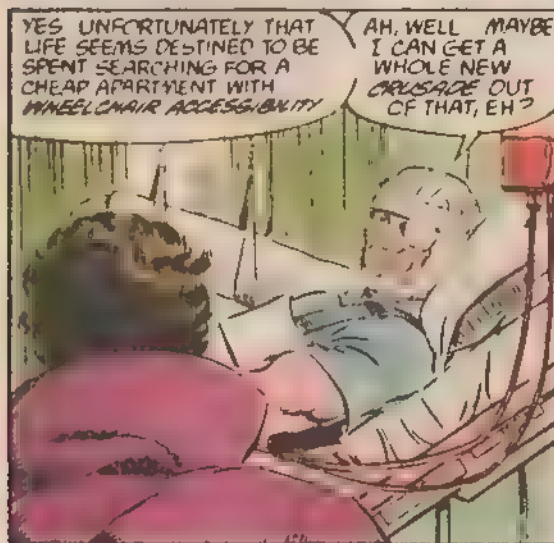
YOU MEAN, KNOWING I'M NEVER GOING TO WALK AGAIN?

MOSTLY I ALTERNATE BETWEEN A FATALISTIC RESIGNATION AND CONTEMPLATING INNOVATIVE WAYS OF KILLING MYSELF



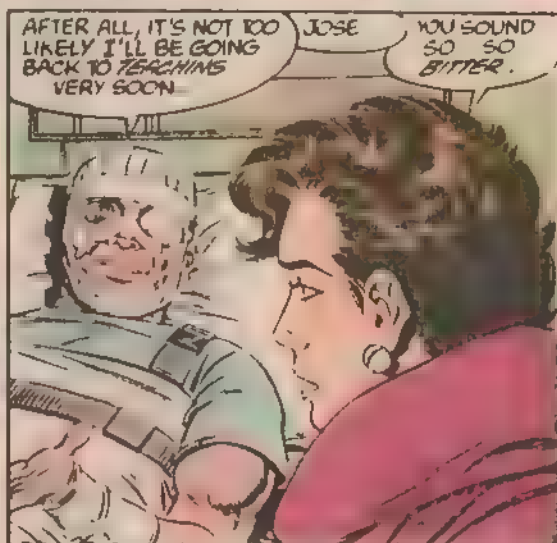
JOSE! DON'T SAY THAT! DON'T EVEN THINK IT!

YOU'RE YOUNG YOU'VE GOT YOUR WHOLE LIFE AHEAD OF YOU



YES UNFORTUNATELY THAT LIFE SEEMS DESTINED TO BE SPENT SEARCHING FOR A CHEAP APARTMENT WITH WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY

AH, WELL, MAYBE I CAN GET A WHOLE NEW CRUSADE OUT OF THAT, EH?



AFTER ALL, IT'S NOT TOO LIKELY I'LL BE GOING BACK TO TEACHING VERY SOON

JOSE

YOU SOUND SO SO BITTER.



DO I? WELL... MAYBE I AM. I GOT IT INTO MY HEAD I COULD BECOME SOME KIND OF SUPERHERO.

DO SOMETHING FOR THIS TOWN THAT MAYBE NOBODY ELSE COULD DO NOT EVEN SUPERMAN



AND THE FIRST TIME I GO UP AGAINST A REAL SUPER-VILLAIN

YOU ACCUSE YOURSELF MOST ADMIRABLY MR DELGADO

SUPERMAN!

LOIS...

I... DIDN'T
EXPECT TO
FIND YOU
HERE...

I HOPE YOU HAVEN'T
COME TO SAY "I TOLD
YOU SO," AMIGO.

I GUESS YOU WERE
RIGHT. MY LUCK
FINALLY RAN OUT.



I'D SAY YOUR
LUCK WAS
RUNNING ON
MAXIMUM
OVERDRIVE,
JOSE.

TO HAVE EVEN
SURVIVED A BATTLE
WITH A SUPERHUMAN
LIKE COMBATTOR...

WHAT'S THE
LATEST ON OUR
LATE FRIEND,
SUPERMAN?

VERY LITTLE,
LOIS.
COMBATTOR
WASN'T CARRYING
ANY I.D. OF
COURSE...

AND THE AUTOPS
REVEALED ONLY
THAT HE WAS
PUMPED FULL
OF SOME
MYSTERY
CHEMICAL...



SURVIVED...? WELL,
STRICTLY
BY DEFINITION I
SUPPOSE YOU
COULD SAY
THAT.

AT LEAST... I FARED
BETTER THAN THE
OTHER GUY!





BY MYSTERY I
TAKE IT YOU MEAN
UNKNOWN...

...AND
UNTRACEABLE.

BY... CONVENTIONAL
METHODS, ANYWAY.
BUT I'VE ALREADY
TAKEN CERTAIN STEPS...

THERE IS A SINGLE
MIND... A SINGLE
INSTIGATOR
BEHIND ALL THIS...



AND HE KNOWS HIS
DAYS ARE NUMBERED.

ER...

OH,
SUPERMAN! I
DIDN'T KNOW YOU
WERE HERE, TOO.

I'M... SORRY,
BUT I'M AFRAID
YOU'LL REALLY
BOTH HAVE TO
GO NOW.



THAT'S ALL RIGHT,
NURSE. I WAS
JUST LEAVING.

BE...
GOOD TO
YOURSELF,
JOSE.

I WILL.
THANKS, LOIS.
THANKS FOR...
EVERYTHING.



CAN I... GIVE
YOU A LIFT
HOME, LOIS?

NO.
QUITE FRANKLY,
SUPERMAN...



...FROM NOW
ON I'D MUCH
RATHER
WALK!

NEXT ISSUE:
VIGILANTE
IS DEAD...
BUT NOT
FORGOTTEN...
Introducing
Checkmate
in
ACTION
COMICS
#598 in 30
DAYS



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L-3028

Dear John & Michael:

ACTION #592 was fantastic. To begin with, the art was, as always with John, excellent. In my opinion, John Byrne is one of very few artists who can draw Kirby's characters well. (The others include Richard Howell, Steve Rude, and, of course, the King himself.) The portrait of Barda on page one was stunning.

Sleez is a great villain. His constant evil grin is a perfect touch. One thing I always wondered about the New Gods is their names. Do their names shape their personalities, or do they choose names already knowing what their personality is? Did Sleez's name make him disgusting, or did he choose it because he knew he was disgusting? Interesting thought there...

All in all, a good issue. Let's have more like this. (Now why am I asking for that? I know you'll keep up the quality.)

Erich Mees
3456 Spalding Drive
Dunwoody, GA 30338

We think that Sleez would've been just as disgusting even if his parents named him Tom, Dick or Andy Helfer!

Dear Michael:

I was very satisfied with the conclusion of the Big Barda/Mr. Miracle story in ACTION #593. A lot of the ACTION stories seem rushed when contained in one issue. You should try more multi-parters; the stories feel more complete in two or more parts.

The opening scene with the lock and key alarm was great! Byrne is so good with adding fun characterization detail.

Being unfamiliar with Mr. Miracle, I was glad you decided to slip in the brief origin section. It explained a great deal.

I'd like to see this trio work together again soon. Maybe fighting a natural disaster from Earth.

Jeff Mitchell
1794 W. Minnehaha
St. Paul, MN 55104

Dear DC:

Mister Miracle!! Yes! Yes!! Yes!!!

I can't tell you how much I enjoyed your version of my all-time favorite character from Mr. Kirby's NEW GODS/FOREVER PEOPLE clan.

This is how Mr. Miracle should be done! Despite all that has happened to Scott Free, his character is still a very light character with a very definite flair

of the circus showman. He's a show-off, and he loves it.

Mr. Byrne, your version of MM was a nice oasis. Your Mister Miracle was every bit the showman. His front door lock bit was hilarious, but appropriately flashy. And I think he actually enjoyed being bashed over the head and welded into a trash dumpster. I know he enjoyed explaining his escape to Sleez. You also gave the character a very strong dash of confidence. Confidence in massive amounts, and sometimes over-confidence, is a must for Mister Miracle's character. You brought it out in him masterfully in both his speech and his appearance.

You're very good at everything you do, Mr. Byrne.

Gee, I guess I told you how much I enjoyed your version of MM after all. Would have been a short letter if I hadn't, though, wouldn't it have?

Dana E. Johnson
#406 St. James Ct.
103 E. Central
Miami, OK 74354

Dear Mike:

Re: ACTION #593. I enjoyed it. This issue didn't show Superman in every other panel as in past issues. It gave Supes a decent break and let the spotlight stay a while on Mister Miracle, which I thought was done extremely well. One thing I didn't like was seeing Mister Miracle's origin again. I felt it wasn't important to the story at hand. One thing I do like is that in recent issues you told us the creator of the guest character. Try to keep on doing that, it adds a nice touch.

Now I want to say something about all the Superman titles. How about introducing a new villain and keeping him/her around for more than two issues? I have liked all the new villains you have introduced, but you either kill them or revert them to normal. I've liked Bloodsport, Host, Rampage, The Circle, Concussion, Stratos (whatever happened to him?) and Sleez. Please give this serious thought. Another thing—how about giving the fetters page in AOS a name? It would help.

Ben Milton
4003 East 29th St.
Newburgh Heights, OH 44105

We try, Ben, we really try—but no matter what we do, we can't please all of the readers all of the time! Jeff Mitchell was glad we put Mister Miracle's origin

in our story—and now your letter comes. It's enough to make a grown editor cry.

Dear Mike, John, and Co.:

Sadly, I wasn't aware that this particular creative team was on ACTION until recently, when, in the local comics shop I spotted a beautiful cover by Big John with a character that took me back to 1971 and Jack Kirby's triumphant return to DC. Namely, Big Barda! John ... did you study Kirby's DC characters thoroughly or what? My God ... it was like coming home. John has captured Barda's flavor nicely.

I've since purchased back issues (not cheap, and scarcer than 1895 silver dollars) of ACTION and nearly wept at the care and detail with which you rendered Darkseid, Orion, Lightray, and the rest of Kirby's creations.

Before I get back to "RE: Action" comments, allow me to say that NOBODY loves Jack Kirby more than me—nowhere on the planet Earth! The New Gods! The Forever People! Mr. Miracle! Kamandi! The Demon! Omac! Sandman!—Wow! Darkseid is the most terrifying super-villain in comics history, and I defy anyone to prove me wrong!

I'm pleased as can be with what you're doing with the Fourth World now. I see that MM is a JLI member and will be in ACTION #593. Great! Let's not forget that Scott Free, while not a possessor of the raw power of an Orion or Kalibak, is still the son of Hightfather Isaya, and a god! Not just a gaudily costumed escape artist!

Consider, please, future team-ups with Etrogen the Demon and Omac, two of my very favorites. This would be mind-bending. Thanks for breathing fresh air into Jack's creations, John.

I think that John Byrne's DC work is true art. He draws each panel as if it were a giant poster. He draws nice rocks, intricate street scenes and mechanical devices. John also trimmed Barda's figure down in the appropriate places. As of late, Kirby's figures have become "thicker." Big Barda is shown here how she was meant to look—simply great.

Sleez is beautiful! If allowed, he could serve as a multifunctional villain for every title you have. He is a gruesome cuss.

John's prowess as a writer/scripter/plotter is getting more focused by the month. Go with it, Mr. Byrne. The more I read, and write to you guys, the

more positive I feel about the Man of Steel.

I said all of that to get to this: you people at DC have me excited again. There's life after Kirby after all! I could write for days. Suffice that I've felt compelled to buy, read, and then write about comics, the latter only twice in my life.

Til Barda leaves Scoot for Sleez...

Occie J. Gillis, Jr.
1128 Ocala Rd. #H2
Tallahassee, FL 32304

Check out ACTION #587 for that team-up between Superman and Etigan you requested, Occie. (Say, does that request for Omac count as another one of them there list thingies?)

We were also glad to hear that you like Jack Kirby's work. Oc, but there are at least a hundred people here at the office who also claim to be the King's greatest fan on Earth—unless, of course they're not from Ear—I Oh, not More Man-hunters!!!

Dear DC:

John continues to amaze me. Until recently, I had never particularly appreciated the New Gods mythos, but after the Big Barda/Mr. Miracle team-up, as well as the recent appearance of the New Gods, I admit that I am intrigued. With Mr. Miracle in the JLI, the upcoming Forever People series, and Darkseid all over the place, I'm tempted to pick up a few back issues of the New Gods just to know what's going on. It's good to see Kirby recognized for his talent.

It seems there's been some minor controversy over the frequency of "T.M. Maple's" letters. I, for one, would have no compunctions against printing them. If the gentleman (?) consistently takes the time to mail out hundreds of articulate and well thought out letters, then by all means, print them. Would you rather see a letter saying, "Here's my list of the one hundred people I would most like to see Supey team up with..."?

Anyway, I wanted to applaud you on your success with the revitalized Superman. My minor quibbles are outnumbered by the changes for the better. It's too bad his change couldn't have appeared as a result of the Crisis, but that's a minor point. I look forward to more continuity between the three Superman titles. Have one story stretch between them; I know I'd rather see a story end in three weeks rather than three months.

The three Superman titles are always piled on top of the stack to be read first. This past year of the new Superman has been fantastic, and the future looks even more promising.

Rob Rausch
Address withheld

We decided not to print the list of people you'd like to see Superman teamed up with, Rob, just to save you from yourself! Thanks for your vote of confidence, though!

Dear Mike:

The recent Superman-Mister Miracle team-up was great! John has a real talent for moving himself (and Superman) into the vastly different worlds of the characters he is using. One moment he can be absorbed in the weird, supernatural adventures of the Phantom Stranger, the next in Hawkman's super-scientific battles, and finally in the totally off-the-wall escapades of the Apokolips-New Genesis characters. Even a new character like Sleez (created, I presume, by John) blends in perfectly with the other denizens of Apokolips. His appearance and even his name are perfectly Kirbyesque.

The art, as usual, was wonderful. John can tell a story with an economy of words and a lot of detailed pictures, a good skill for a writer-artist to have. Take the sequence on pages 12-14. Beautiful! The only real talking was the babbling of the thugs, but it got right to the heart of what Mister Miracle is all about.

In the future, I'd like to see team-ups with Captain Atom, the Blue Beetle, the Flash, Nightwing, Captain Marvel, and Zatanna. You guys have a refreshingly different team-up book here. Keep up the great work!

David Metz
2952 N. Stowell Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53211

Thanks, Dave—it's letters like yours that make all the hard work we do around here worthwhile! (That reminds me of something I read a few months back in one of their comics—don't let 'im fool you kids, I used to be Mark Gruenwald's assistant editor ... I know who does all the work in his office! If anyone's the hardest-working-editor-in-comics, he works at DC—we don't have assistants!! Thank you all for letting me get that off my chest!)

Oh, and getting back to Dave's letter, you guys didn't think we'd let this letters page go by without one list of guys-to-team-Superman-up-with, did you?

Dear DC:

Re: ACTION #592 and 593.

Just where was this Sleez character during Kirby's Fourth World series? Hiding under some rock here on Earth, perhaps! This guy makes DeSaad—Darkseid's long-time (and long-suffering) assistant—look like a 4-H'er by comparison!

I'm not sure Sleez is gone. The explosion might have been a means to keep Superman busy while he escaped. Bet he'll be back in about a year to fifteen months!

The art, as always, was excellent. The story, though, left something to be desired. I half-expected Barda (and Mister Miracle) to join forces with Superman to halt some kind of plot by Darkseid. But, no—instead I get this. Oh, well, I suppose Darkseid is still recovering from LEGENDS.

Jacob Gilbert
118 4th Street
Troy, NY 12180

Sorry you didn't go for our story, Jacob—but at least you'll be able to make a lot of money collecting on your wagering!

Dear John, Keith, Tom, John and Michael:

This letter will be about the Big Barda/Mister Miracle/Superman team-up.

My favorite artist is Jack Kirby. I grew up on Jack (and Stan)'s work at Marvel. I followed Jack over to DC when he joined your crew. Mister Miracle and Big Barda are my favorite characters from that period of comic book history. When I discovered that Mister Miracle was to be a part of the new Justice League I was overjoyed. I loved 1986's MISTER MIRACLE SPECIAL, too!

Oh, yeah—the appearance of Barda, Miracle, Oberon and Darkseid in ACTION COMICS #592 and 593 is a welcome glimpse of some old friends, as well! Mister M. worked as well here with Superman as he does in JLI! As a matter of fact, I've come to expect great stuff with these characters—what made this story fantastic, though, was the new villain, Sleez! Now here is a truly unique villain, one who lives off the degeneration of good to evil. I've often wondered how Suicide Slum fit in with the rest of Metropolis. Here it is shown to be a place governed by an alien/demonic creature that thrives on the energy given off by suffering and degradation. Simply put, great, John!

Having Darkseid aid Miracle in issue #593 has me worried about just what he's up to, though. Hope of Sleez turns up again soon—he's a great villain and I would love to see more of him in other books as well! No, I don't think he was blown to Kingdom Come, do you?

Don Lambert Jr.
310 N. Walnut St. RR 1
Mechanicsville, IA 52306

Thanks to requests like yours for more Sleez in our comics. Don, Mister Gilbert may just become a richer man than even we thought at first!



NEXT ISSUE: You never heard of them—but CHECKMATE debuts here next month! Who are they? What are they? Those are the same questions Superman's going to be asking—and he's determined to find the answers! Hard to believe though those answers may be! (You might want to be here, alongside the Man of Steel—since CHECKMATE's own series starts the month after ACTION #598 comes out! Get in on the ground floor—with Superman as your bodyguard! With this new team involved, that's your safest bet!) See ya then, Pilgrims!

—Mike (The Hardest-Working-Editor-In-Comics-Really) Carlin